

9.

THE
ANSVVERES

OF SOME BRETHREN
OF THE MINISTERIE,

TO
THE REPLYES
OF THE MINISTERS

and Professours of Divinitie
in ABERDEENE.

CONCERNING

THE LATE COVENANT.

2: CHRON. 15. 15.

*And all Iſr^al were joyced at the Oath: For they had ſworne
with all their heart, and ſought Him with their whole de-
ſire: and Hee was found of them.*

Printed the yeare of God, 1638.

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

That you maye know our Proceedings, how wee are brought upon the Stage, and conforming to our expectation, we put in print. Comming to *Aberdene* on Fryday the afternoone, wee received the *Demands* of our *Reverend Brethren* that night late; and, for the greater expedition, without delay, wee returned our *summarie answers* on Saturday at night. On the *Lords Day* following, wee desired to expresse our selves to the People in presence of the Ministerie, but the Pulpits and Kirks were altogether refused; and therefore in the most convenient place wee could have, *sub dio*, and at such houres as were vacant from the ordinarie exercises of publicke Worship, wee delivered our Message in the Audience of manie. After our last Sermon, towards Evening, wee found that our labour was not in vaine in the LORD, for diverse persons, of speciall note, both for place and wisdom, with willing heart, & great readinesse of minde, did publickly put their hands to the COVENANT. Having the weeke following seene some parts of the Countrey, (where besides the Presbyteries of *Alford* and *Deane*, who had subscribed before, the Moderator, & diverse of the Presbyterie of *Aberdene*, the Presbyterie of *Turriff*, after they were satisfied in some scruples, did also subscribe) wee returned the next Saturday to *Aberdene*; where finding that some others had subscribed that week, we resolved to preach upon the morne. That night wee received a *Reply*, unto which before our returne home, wee have made an *Answer*. All these we desire may bee impartially considered: and if it shall please the LODD, that any light shall come from our labour unto thy minde, let it bee ascribed not unto us, (who neither had time nor helps for such a taske) but to the brightness of the Truth, and Cause it selfe, and to the Father of Lights: to whom bee all Glorie.

WHat did proceed from our Penne in our *Answer* to the D.D. of *Aberdene*, concerning the late Declaration given to his Majesties *Commissioner*, did flow from minds filled with a zeale to the peace of this Kirk & Kingdome, and from our earnest desires of a perfect harmonie, betwixt the King and his Subjects against all *Mistaking*. This zeale of ours wee confesse made us studie more, how to decline and to keepe our selves from touching such of the D.D. demands as were thornie, than howe to walke safely through them. And likewise to make manifest to his Majesties good Subjects in all places whether the D.D. demands, and our answers should happen to come, That matters inclined to pacification, and were in a faire way off setting: for which peaceable intentions we could conceive nothing to bee more behovefull, than by word and write to make knowne to all men the forsaide declaration, which his Majesties loyall Subjects presented to his Majesties *Commissioner*, for clearing their *Covenant* of all unlawfull Combination against *Authoritie*. And by so doing, to stoppe the mouthes of our *Adversaries*, and to stay all their obloquies. In using of this meane, it was far from our thoughts to wound anye man, or to write anye word, which might give the smallest offence to the meannest of his Majesties Subjects, Hoping rather that these our proceedings should have beene more acceptable to *Authoritie*, more approven of the wise and men of understanding, and more agreeable unto the minds of such as are for peace; than rashly and unadvisedly to have gone on in a Dispute of *State questions*, which hardly at any time hath beene profitable for peace. and which at this time seemed to us (to say no further) most unseasonable & impertinent. Yet knowing that it were not only bale and shamefull, but in our persons, and in our proceedings in this cause, a very great incongruities, and in it selfe sinfull, to speake wickedly for GOD, and to talke deceitfullie for him. for that were as one man mocketh another so to mocke him. *Iob.* 13. 7. 9. and to make iniquitie a meane to promote *pietie*,

etc, (a policie which wee have not learned,) as if GOD could bee served with our sinnes. Wee have made heere a brieft relation of the reasons & grounds, where-upon wee have in our answers confidently affirmed, that his Majesties *Commissioner* did accept, and was well pleased with the late Declaration;

1. His G. was most earnest to have the late *Covenant* so solemnly sworne, and so universally subscribed to bee rendred, or rescinded, and did propone plausible reasons for that effect. But this by such strong impediments as were at that time represented, and are now extant in print, being impossible to us to doe, except wee wold sin highly against God. His G. afterward declared that the Kings Majesty was most willing to indict an Assembly & call a *Parliament*, but that our *Covenant* in the clause of mutuall defence, was a combination against *Authoritie*, and that we had sworne to defend one another in our owne private quarrells, as well as in the cause of Religion. This his G. desired to bee removed, as a maine hinderance of the obtaining of our desires, and without the removall whereof an Assembly, and *Parliament* could not be indicted. When this motion of a Declaration was first proponed to the severall meetings the greater part was against it: because no Declaration, containing any thing contrarie to the *Covenant* could bee granted, and an explanation of the *Covenant*, the meaning whereof seemed to be plaine enough, would no more please than the *Covenant* it self: but by the earnest dealing of some Noblemen of his Majesties Counsell sent from the *Commissioner*, with some Commissioners sent from everie meeting, It was thought meet in end, that a Supplication containing a Declaration should bee formed, which at last his G. did receive at the hands of the Supplicants, and upon the receiving thereof promised to deal with the Kings Majestie for obtaining a free Assembly and Parliament, which he refused to undertake without this Declaration. Thus by the very nature and course of our Proceedings about this point, it

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is manifest that the Declaration was, at least in this farre-satisfactorie to the *Commissioner* himselfe, that hee did promise to mediate for an Assembly and Parliament, which was both the summe of our desires, and the onely end of this Declaration. So that no man could in any reason think that we should have wronged him in affirming that his G. did accept, and was well pleased with that Declaration since upon the sight, receiving, and hearing thereof, he promised to doe his best endeavours with his Majestie for obtaining what was petitioned by us, which before and without it, his G. had utterly refused to doe.

2. The three Noble-men of his Majesties Counsell who were employed by his G. about this Declaration, did repaire ordinarily to him for advysing what forme of Declaration would best please, and give best satisfaction. And we had great reason to think that the forme which pleased their Lordships should not be displeasing, or unacceptable to his G.

3. After that diverse formes of Declaration were drawn up, and none of them was found to give satisfaction; at last it was thought good, that one should bee formed by waye of Supplication for a generall Assembly and Parliament.

And because the maine hinderance of obtaining thereof, was that our *Covenant* was suspect to be a combination against *Authoritie*, it was found necessarie that this impediment should bee removed by declaring that no such thing was intended in the *Covenant*. This forme of Supplication did first please the three Noble-men, and thereafter, diverse parts and expressions of it were corrected by his G. particular direction, which are still kept in remembrance, & in the notes of the Noblemen and others at that time employed about this work from their severall meetings. This made us to think that his G. was well pleased with so much as was corrected by himselfe, and that his G. would have also corrected other parts & expressions thereof, if hee had not bene well pleased with them: and therefore made

us secure that his G. would no have offended that we or any other, should have affirmed so much.

4. Wee have reason to think that the first Declaration which was shewne to the Petitioners by the three Noblemen sent from his G. to negotiate with them, would have given satisfaction; why then shall wee not think, that the Supplication mended by his owne particular direction, not in the Petitorie part, but in the Declaration which it contained, might in like manner satisfie.

5. Among other partes of the Declaration which were mended by the Commissioners direction, One was in the beginning thereof, where, in place of that which was first written *That the Kings Majestie had conceived the Confession of Faith and Covenant lately renewed by us his Majesties Subiects to bee an unlawfull combination against Authority;* His G. would have it changed thus, *That his Majesties Commissioner hath conceived the Confession of Faith, &c.* Wee might therefore have imagined that the Kings Majestie possibly would not have beene pleased with our Declaration, but it could not so much as enter in our minds that his Majesties Commissioner, who would have the words to expresse his owne dislike, and not the Kings, should not for his owne part beene pleased with it, or bee offended with us, for affirming so much.

6. There was some reasoning between the three Counsellors and the Petitioners, whether the words of the Declaration should bee thus conceived, *a maine Hindrance,* or, *the maine Hindrance,* for which later conception the Petitioners did plead, That this which was the maine hinderance being removed by their declaration, for which end they were moved to make it, ther might bee no more hinderances afterward, or at least so small ones, that they might easily be put out of the way; and the truth is, that since the removall of that main hinderance, we have heard of no particulare hinderance from the contents of the *Covenant.* This also did make us to say with the greater confidence that the Declaration did please.

7. When the Declaration was received by his Majesties Commissioner, was read openly, and was confirmed heartily by the oath of the petitioners. His G. declared that hee verily believed that they meant what they spake, that hee hoped what they had written should prove satisfactorie to his Majestie, and that hee would against the time appointed do his best endeavours with his Majestie for obtaining our desires, which could not but make us conceive that his G. was satisfied with it himself.

8. Although all the companies of petitioners could not bee present to hear with their own eares, the words that were spoken, yet all of them had so much as we have written, reported unto them, not by uncertaine rumour, but by the faithfulness of their Commissioners; and upon the certaintie of this report, and certaine evidences of the truth, they rested satisfied, and were put in hope of a generall Assembly at the *Commissioner* his returne. Which hath made them also now in their answers to the last of the late propositions made unto them by his Majesties *Commissioner* after his returne, to affirme, that his G. accepted their Declaration as the most ready & powerfull mean, which could come within the compasse of their thoughts, for clearing them of that objected Combination, lyke as they have testified no lesse in their letters to others. So that if wee have erred in our affirmation, we have not erred alone, but have beene carried away with the common error of so many as were heere convened, without exception of any one.

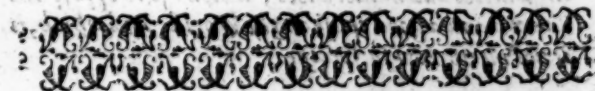
9. As it is verie unbecoming our profession & calling, so was it verie far from our minde & desire, in our answers to touch the honourable Lords of Council, or any in authority under his sacred Majestie. If the Act of approbation with the Subscriptions thereof, (the ground of the missive) was torne and rescinded and the missive it selfe, once thought fitte to bee sent, was returned and promise given, that it should not be sent, there was no lesse done than was assevered by us. What reason wee had to affirme that this

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was done upon the Supplication & complaint of the lieges, may appeare, if it be remembered. First, that some of the honourable Lords of Councill after they were informed by the supplicants, what practises were done to their cause by the Act approving the Proclamation, were passionatly desirous to have the Act rescinded, and did declare that they would not spare to deal with the Commissioner for that effect. 2. When it was required by the Supplicants, that another Act should bee made bearing, that by their subscribing the Proclamation they had not given their Approbation to it. It was often and at large answered, that they did not by their Subscription approve the Proclamation, but onely gave warrant thereby to the Clarke for registration, and to the Heralde for publishing the same. And thirdly the Supplicants presented a petition containing the reasons of their desires, and could not bee satisfied, except upon these reasons the Act were rescinded, and the missive stayed. This Supplication was received by the Commissioner, was openly read, and answer was given by his G. that their desire should be satisfied. All this in substance was knowne to many thousands before any word was seene from our penne, neither had any thing written by us come to the sight of the world, if it had not bene put to the Presse by the D. D.

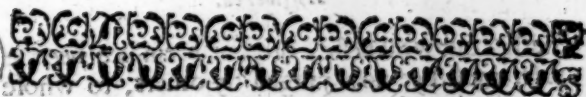
So much have wee bene constrained to say for vindicating our selves, who esteeme it to bee our chiefest comfort and greatest glory, that wee plead for the cause of God, and trueth of Religion, and desire neither in our plea, nor in our preaching for the defence, of the trueth to alledge any untrueth. We have written nothing before, or at this time, from an humour to contradict any man, or to wrong the meanest, far lesse any of the honorable Lords of his Majesties Councill, & least of all his Majesties high Commissioner. But doe confesse that there was much unquieting great working on both sides; & many meetings, before the forme of Declaration could bee agreed upon, and received: And wee
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doe believe also that the rescinding of the *Covenant*, so vehemently urged, was that which would have given him, as his Majesties Commissioner, greatest satisfaction, Neither are wee ignorant that *Partly* through the malignancie of *Sycophants* watching all opportunities to promote their owne projects; *Partly* through the rubs and difficulties which occurre in working of great matters to their wished ends; and *Partly* through the busie and overweaning conceit of some who would seeme to bee somewhat that they may warme themselves at a combustion, and who are readie to raise suspitions against the wisest and best affected to *Authoritie*; much must beewritten and spoken *per rationis dictato*, which otherwise would not bee thought so necessarie. Yet cannot wee conceive but the acceptance of the Declaration of the loyaltie of his Majesties Subjects set down in writ, and seconded by oath, was good service to the King, and that labouring with his Majestie to possesse his royall heart with the best conceptions and constructions of the actions of his well meaning, and honest hearted Subjects, deserveeth from them the increase of that respect, and honour which they owe to all, whom God honoureth to bee instruments of good and happinesse to this Kirke and Kingdome, which the LORD establish under his Majesties long and prosperous reigne.



TO THE READER.

Good Reader, what could not be performed by us in Printing or Answeres severally after their owne Replies, let it bee supplied by thy selfe in reading. And if there bee any part of our Answeres which seemeth not to be relative to the Replies, let it bee imputed to the D. D. whose printed Copie agrieth not with that, which in writ was sent unto us under their hands, & unto which our Answeres were made. Neither is it our fault that our answeres have not come to light before this tyme, we having sent the same, without the changing of one word to bee printed at Aberdene, before our comming from that part of the Countrie: This must bee ascribed to the ordinary difficulties and hinderances, which use to oppose the Truth and a good cause in the World, and which, it is not meete now to specifye.



TO OUR REVEREND BRETHREN,

The Doctors and Ministers of Aberdeene.



That our *Answeres* (Reverend and beloved Brethren) have not given you full satisfaction, as it may bee imputed to our weaknesse, in the defence of so good a Cause, so may it proceede also from your owne prejudice against what could be said by us, which wee have some reason to suspect for two causes, one is, that your *Demands* which wee conceived to have beene intended meerly for us, and were sent unto us from you in write, were published before our comming in print, lyke as you have now printed and published your *Replies* before you had seene our *Answeres* unto that which wee received from you last in write, wee having promised to the bearer, to returne an *Answer* shortly ere wee departed the Countrey. This may seemer rather to bee a seeking of victorie from prejudice, than a search of veritie for satisfaction.

The other cause of our suspicion, is, that the groundes of our *Answeres* to you, have proven satisfactorie to others, who for Age, and gifts of Learning and Understanding, are prynces in this Kirk and Kingdome, and to whom modestie will not suffer you to preferre your selves. But whether

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whether our weaknesse, or your prejudice bee the cause, must bee now judged by others, to whose viewe yee have brought us: Whom therefore wee with you heartily desire unpartiallie to consider our first and second *Answeres*; wishing and hoping that partialitie, prejudice, and all worldly respects and feares, layde aside, the naked Truth shall bee seene of all her lovers. Concerning your confidence of us, as wee in loue judge, that yee thinke not your selves to bee striving against the Truth; so maye yee conceive, that wee can no more bee brought to your minde, than wee can bee drawne from the profession of our Religion, as it hath been reformed, sworne, and confirmed by the late and preceeding Covenants, and from following the example of our religious Reformers, and the many Worthies succeeding them in this Kirke, who would have beene glad to have seene the dayes which wee now doe see: and for which wee pray, that both yee and wee may bee thankfull; so shall it not be imputed unto us, that wee have not discerned, and used the daye of the Lords visitation: so shall wee all rejoyce together in the Daye of the LORD.

To the first Reply.

YOUR experience in your *Disputes* against the common *Adversarie*, wherein you say ye are so frequent, hath (no doubt) taught you, howe easie a matter it is to multiply *Objections* against the *Truth*, and *Cause* of God: and

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and your selves knowe, that your *Objection* against our *Calling*, and the *Warrant* of our coming to you, was framed, and published in print, before it was propounded unto us: and ere our *Answer* could bee had; but so soone as we did heare your *Demands*, we answered incontinent, in the humilitie and trueth of our minds, that wee were to obtrude nothing upon you, or your flock, by any particular *Authoritie*, *Civill* or *Ecclesiastick*, but that we did come in all meeknesse, to represent unto you the present case of this Kirke, and in love to intreat you, to joyn with us, for the peace thereof; for which wee trust, without wronging any lawfull *Authoritie*, wee may claime the *Warrant* of the highest and greatest *Authority*, although wee had not beene sent from almost the whole Kirke and Kingdome, lawfully convened at this time, for preservation of *Religion*, and of the *Liberties* and *Lawes* of this Kingdome, so sore shaken, by the usurpation of the *Prelates*, and their *Favourers*. Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works, &c. sayeth the Apostle, *Heb. 10. 24.* And where yee object, that without your leave we preached within your *Congregation*; which is aggravated by you, as a hainous fault, both against *Scripture*, and against the *Canons* of *antient Councells*, which yee have laboriously quoted against us, we intreat you, to bee more sparing, lest the guiltinesse, if there be any, reflex upon your selves: For your *Pulpits* and *Kirks* beeing denied us, (not from any injurie done by us, but by your owne determination, before our coming) a necessitie was laid upon us, to deliver our message in such places, as your courtesie did permit; wherein no man will find, that we have failed, if he consider, first, That there is as wyde difference betwixt *Ecclesia turbata & pacata*, the troubled and peaceable estate of a Kirke, as is betwixt *Ecclesia constituta & constituta*, & many things are necessarie in the one, which perhaps are not expedient in the other. Ye speak of the *Constitution* of the Kirke this yeere, as if ye had beene

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speaking thereof many yeeres before this time. 2. That the word of God, and the *Canons of Councels*, will have Pastors so to care for their owne flockes that they forbidde them not, to care for the whole Kirke, especiallie in the time of a common *Combustion*. When the house is on fire everie man ought to runne to all rowmes, where hee may quench it: when a laik striketh up in a Ship, every Mariner, yea, everie Passenger ought to labour to stop it. Even hee who is not universall Pastor of the Kirke, is Pastor of the universall Kirke: and the Apostle hath taught us, That we are members one of another, *Rom. 12. 4.* As, all the members of one bodie beeing many, are one bodie; so also is Christ. 1. *Cor. 12. 12.* That the members should have the same care one of another, verse. 25. If some members of this Kirk had not cared more kindlie, in this time of common danger: than other some have done, the whole bodie had bene ere now dangerously, if not desperately diseased. 3. That we made choyse of such houres, for delivering our Message, that the people might attend your ordinarie times of publick worship; which maketh your charge, of the peoples contempt, or ours, of your Ministerie, to be most unjust.

In the second part of your *Reply* to our *Answer* to your first *Demand*, yee might have made choyse of words witnessing more respect to the most part of the Kingdom now, and to the Kirke in former times, than of a *Confederation*; and *Negative Confession*: we know no other *Confederation* at this time, but this same laudable *Covenant* which our Progenitors, and many yet living, made with God, and amongst themselves, at the commandment of *Authoritie*, and according to the example of the people of God in former times. Neither is that *short Confession* merely *Negative*, since the beginning thereof is *Affirmative*, & doeth virtuallie containe the first large *Confession* ratified in Parliament, 1567. 2. No Pastors, in our knowledge, have either bene forced to flee to forraigne Countreies,

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or have bene threatned with the want of their *Stipends*, for the refusing their *Subscription*: but this wee have heard, that some of them have of their owne accord, gone to Court, for procuring of *Protections* against their *Creditors*, and against the *Lawes*, and *Duties* of good Subjects, have made *Lies* between the King and his people. Others wee knowe have wilfully refused, to abyde with their flock: and beeing earnestly entreated by them, to attend their *Charge*, have left them, and have gone out of the Countrie, for no reason, but because the people had subscribed, and as ye know, that *Arguments* have bene taken from *augmentation of Stipends*, to hinder *Subscription*: so ye may know, That *fear of worldly losse*, rather hindereth men to subscribe, than *scruple of conscience*. The Prelates flight, seemeth rather to have proceeded from inward suries of accusing consciences, or for feare of a storme, (which beeing procured by their owne doing, may be easily prognosticated by them) than from the inforcing of *Subscription* of the *Covenant*, which in our knowledge was never required of any of the Prelates, although they bee grosslie guiltie of the breach of the *Covenant*, which they did sweare, and subscribe before. 3. Your helpe, by your prayers, and other meanes, for extinguishing of the present *Combustion*, wee still desire, but withall intreat, that you would both joyn with the rest of the kirks of the Kingdome, in publick humiliation and fasting, which the Lord himselte doeth preclaime, and call for at this time; so should your prayers bee the more effectuall, and also yee bee good instruments, according to your power, with your owne people, and the countrey about, to joyne in the *Covenant*, so should yee find the worke of *Pacification* the more easie. 4. The *Reasons* which wee touched in our *Answer*, for proving, that ye might, without iust offence to anye, joyne with us in subscribing, are not yet answered for, first, a sound *Interpretation* of the *Covenant*, although proceeding from a private person, and altogether voyde
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of externall *Authoritie*, cannot make a substantiall difference: and if the *Interpretation* bee unsound, although it were confirmed with *Authoritie*, it maketh not a substantiall co-incidence. 2. Why is it denyed, that the former *Covenant* containeth *Mutuall defence*, since all are obliged thereby to defend *Religion*, according to their vocation and power, and the King's person and authoritie, which can not possibly bee done without *Mutuall Defence*: and since that clause of the *Covenant*, is so expounded, and applyed upon grounds of perpetuall reason, in the generall *Band* drawne up, and printed by *Authoritie*, anno 1590. 3. Yee must either prove this *Covenant* to bee substantiallyl different from the former, which is impossible, or ye must acknowledge this to have the same *Authority* with the former, since wee are reallie obliged in the former *Covenant*, and virtuellie the same warrant of *King, Counsell, and Assembly*; remaineth, and was never yet discharged: by vertue whereof the *Covenant* might have beene renewed yearely by all the Subjects of the Kingdome, no lesse than it hath beene subscribed yearely by such as passe *Degrees* in *Colledges*, and such as were suspect of *Papistrick* from time to time. 4. What was done by his Majesties *Commissioner*, was not done in a corner, that it needeth to bee pryed into, or doubted of, and what was allowed by his grace, who had so great power from his Majestie, to declare his Majesties will, and to receive *Declarations* from his Subjects, and who was in every point so zealous, and tender of his Majesties service and honour: who are yee, that it should be disallowed by you? Ye will have the kingdome guiltie of *Combination against Authoritie*, and will not have the King to bee satisfied, when they have declared themselves to the contrarie. & their *Declaration* is accepted by his Majesties *Commissioner*. This manner of dealing, is more suitable to *Papists*, and such *Incendiaries*, than for you, who desire to prove good *Patriots*, in using all means of *Pacification*. 5. We are sorrie that ye should be
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the first, who have accounted our *Covenant* to bee a *Confederacie*, against the *Trueth*, since some of your selves, and all everie where haue bene constrained, to acknowledge, that they ayme at the same end with us, to maintaine the *Trueth*. And for that which displeaseth you in our way, that wee deale after such a manner with people, to come in, wee answer, that wee have seene in this Land, *The day of the Lords power*, wherein His people have most willingly offered themselves in multitudes. lyke the dew of the morning: that others of no small *Note*, have offered their *Subscriptions*, and have bene refused, till they should trye, that they joyne in sinceritie, from love to the *Cause*, and not from the feare of men: and that no *Threatnings* have bene used, except of the deserved judgment of God; nor force, except the force of *Reason*, from the high respects which wee owe to Religion, to our *King*, to our *Native Countrie*, to ourselves, and to the posteritie: which hath bene to some a greater constraint, than any externall violence; and we wish, may also prevaile with you.

To the second

WE perceive, that you passe in silence, that which wee answered concerning the *preventing of trouble*, which by all appearance had bene too sensible to many before this time, if the *Conventions* censured by you, had not bene kept; we desire that yee would heere declare your selves, whether yee would have rather received the *Service booke*, *Booke of Canons*, and other *Trashe* of that kynd, tending to the subversion of *Religion*, and to the prejudice of the *Liberties* of the *Kingdom*; thin to have conveened in a peaceable manner, to present *Supplications* to his Majestie, for averting of so great evils. Neither doe yet speake a word of the saying of *K. James*, which ought to bee regarded; both for the witness sake, who is of so great authoritie, and for the testimony which containeth so great reason. For, shall not the whole bodie of a Kingdom stirre

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pro aris & focis or shall our Religion be ruined, & our right be put out, and all men hold their peace? We told you also, that the first part of the Act of *Parliament*, 1585, is relative to another Act in *Queene Marias* time, which specifeth, what sort of *Leagues* and *Bands* are forbid, and setteth us free from the breach of the *Act*; but yee have answered nothing to this, and still dispute from the Act of *Parliament*, rather than from other grounds, better besecming your *Profession* and Ours; and in this will to preclude adhere to the *Letter* of the *Law*, that you will have no *Meetings*, without the Kings consent, even in *Case* of the *preservation* of Religion, of his Majesties *Authority*, and of the *Liberties* of the *Kingdome*, which we are sure must bee contrarie to the reason and life of the *Law*, since *the safety* of the *People* is, the *soveraigne Law*. Although it bee true also that for our *Covenant*, we have the consent of *Authority* pressing upon all the Subjects in the *Generall Band*, and *Confession* of Faith, formerly subscribed for maintenance of the Religion, their *Subscription* and *Oath* as a note of their soundnesse in Religion, and of their loyalty and fidelitie to the King, and his *Crown*, wherein *Iuris-Consults*, more skilled in this kynd, than we need to be, have given their *Responses*, & *verdicts*, in favour of us, and our *Cause*.

2. The poynt touching *Authority*, is so full of Thornes and Rockes, useth to bee so vehemently urged, to procure envye agaynst the Gospell of CHRIST, and can so hardly bee disputed and discussed except in a large *Treatyse*, to the satisfaction of King's and Kingdomes; and all having interest, that for the present wee onelie wish you to heare the testimonies of two great *Divines*, the one is *Whitaker*, in his *Answer* to Master *Reynolds* preface, pag. 6. Stirres and tumults for matters of Religion, *Reynold* rehearseth, that have beene in *Germanie*, *France*, *Bohemia*, as though it were sufficient for their condemnation, that they once resisted, and did not by

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by and by admitt what-so-ever violence was offered
either to GOD'S Truth, or to themselves, contrarie
to Promise, to Oath, to publick Edicts, to Law, where-
by they were warranted to doe as they did: more of this
matter, will I not answer, beeing of another nature,
and cleared long since from the crime of *Rebellion*, not
only by just iust defence of their doing: but also by the *Pro-
clamations* and Edicts of Princes themselves. The other is
Bilson, in his Booke of Christian subjection, in defence
of the *Protestants* in other Countreies, against the ob-
jection of the *Iesuit*, pag. 332, affirming, that sub-
jects maye defend their Antient and Christian Liberties,
covenanted and agreed upon by those Princes to whom
they first submitted themselves, and were ever since
confirmed and allowed by the Kings that have succee-
ded, they may require their owne right, save their own
lyves, beseech, that they bee not used as slaves, but
lyke Subjects; lyke men, not lyke beasts; that they
maye bee convented by Lawes, before Iudges, not
murdered in Corners, by *Inquisitors*. This is also the
judgment of *Rivetus*, in his Commentarie, PSAL. 68
Which beeing looked upon by you, will furnish a
full answer to what yee have cited at length from his
Iesuita vapulans. For betwixt Iesuiticall treasonable &
pernitious doctrine, and practises agaynst Princes, and
Magistrates, refuted by him, and the loyall and sound
doctrine of *Protestants*: your selves knowe the difference
and opposition, lyke as it is cleare as the Sunne, by that
short *Confession*, by the *Application* there-of, to the
tymes in this present *Confession*, by our publicke *Pro-
testation*, and by the *Declaration* exhibited to his Majesties
Commissioner, that wee meane not onely *mutuall con-
currence*, and *assistance in the cause of Religion*, but also to
the uttermost of our power, to defend the King's Ma-
jestie, his Person and Authoritie. Wee would bee glad,
that yee and others were witnesses to our private prayers,
and

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and the most secret of our thoughts. and affections concerning our loyaltie to our dread Sovereigne: so should yee either cease to write in this against us, or bee forced to write against your own Consciences.

5. When wee justifie our *Conventions* and *Covenants*, from their purposed ends, we meane not only the last and most remote ends: but the nearest and immediate, and if nothing in these can merite just censure, the *Conventions* and *Covenants* no more in that which yee call the *Object*, nor in their ends, can bee culpable: what *Aspersions* have beene put upon our *Reformation*, and *Reformers*, by the malice of our *Adversaries*, can not bee unknowne to you. But wee wish, that your ingynes and pennes maye bee better employed, than to joyne with them in so badde a Cause, which we expect also from your prudence, considering the people and place where yee live.

To the third.

YF it doe well and wisely, that you search not curiously into the myndes of Princes, and Reasons of State: but whether all his Majesties Subjects bee satisfied with the last *Proclamation*, needeth no deepe search. For although possibly some had beene more pleased with a *Proclamation*, commanding the *Service Booke*, such especiallie, who either will see no errors in it, or have publickly professed, that they have beene groaning for it, yet the *Protestation* of the Supplicants against it, as it giveth most humble and heartie thanks to his gracious Majestie, for what is granted: so it testifieth upon undeniable evidences, that the *Proclamation* is not a satisfaction of our just desires: for, first, the *Proclamation* supposeth the *Service Booke* to bee no *Innovation of Religion*. 2. That it is not contrare to *Protestant Religion*. 3. That the *Proclamation* giveth not order for discharging all the *Acts* made in favours of the *Service*

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Service Booke, especially that of the 19 of Februarie, which giveth unto it so great Approbation, as serving for maintaining the true Religion, and to beate out all *Superstition*, and no wayes to bee contrarie to the Lawes of this Kingdome, but to bee compyled, and approved for the universall use and edification of all his Majesties Subjects. 4. It is so farre from disallowing the sayde Booke, that it putteth us in feare, that it shall bee prest in a faire and legall way, and therefore, notwithstanding the *Proclamation*, the necessitie of *Covenanting*, which containeth nothing contrarie to the Acts of *Parliament*, nor to the duetie of good Subjects, but is the largest *Testimonie* of our Fidelitie to GOD, and loyaltie to our King, (whatsoever it maye seeme to you to import) doeth yet continue, that his Majestie maye bee pleased, to grant the full satisfaction of our reasonable *Petitions*, and that our *Religion*, and *Liberties*, may bee preserved for afterwards. Who-so-ever professe themselves to be perfectly satisfied with the *Proclamation*, doe proclame in the eares of all the Kingdome, that they are better pleased with the *Service booke* and *Canons*, than with the *Religion*, as it hath bene professed in this Land since the *Reformation*.

To the fourth.

WE were assured that your *Demand* proceeded from a *Mistaking*, & therefore, according to our knowledge, did ingenuously, for your satisfaction, expound unto you the mind of the *Subscribers*, but find now, that we have laboured in vain at your hands, from which we have receiued this *Reply*: unto which, concerning the first, *Misinterpretation*, wee answer: 1. That altho we do neither use *threatnings*, nor obtrude our *Interpretation*, upon you, as bearing any obligatorie power, yet pardon us, that wee match you not, and put you not in the *Balance* with the greatest part of the Kingdome both Ministers, and others, in whose name we recommended this *Interpretation*

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unto you, by all faire *meanes*, and force of Reason: and in so doing, wee are so farre from the breach of our solemne *Oow*, and *Promise*, that wee esteeme this to bee no small prooffe of that godlynesse and righteousnesse, wherein wee are bound by our *Covenant*, to walke. 2. The authoritative judgment of our *Reformers* and *Predecessors*, is evidenced not onlie by the *Confession of Fayth*, ratified in *Parliament*, but also by the bookes of Discipline, Acts of generall *Assemblies*, and their owne *Writs*; wherein if yee will, ye may find *Warant* for this *Interpretation*: and in respect whereof, it is publick, *various medij*, besides these midles of *Scripture* of Antiquitie, and of the Consent of the reformed *Kirks*, which are named for midles by you.

Concerning the 2. *Misconstruction*, it is no marvell that *Prejudices*, and pre-conceived opinions, possing the mynd, make men to fall upon interpretations of their own; but in the South parts of the Kingdome, where many learned and judicious men, both Pastors, & Professors were assembled at the first subscribing thereof, wee remember of none that did fall into that *Mistake*. And the two sorts of *Novations*, such as are already introduced, and such as are supplicated against, are so punctually distinguished, that there is no place left to *Ambiguities*: but on the contrarie, the *Novations* which wee promise to forbear for a time onlie, can not bee supposed in the following words, to bee abjured for ever, as *Popish novations*. 2. Vpon a new examination of the words, yee perceive, that the *Articles of Pearth*, and Episcopacie, are condemned as erroneous corruptions, because we promise, to labour, to recover the former puritie & libertie of the Gospel, unto which our *Answer* is, that it appeareth, that you will have all the *Covenanters* against their intention, and whether they will or not, to disallow, and condemne the *Articles of Pearth*, and Episcopall Government, lest they be tried in a generall *Assembly*. But it is knowne to manie hundredths, that the words were purposely conceived, for satis-

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satisfaction of such as were of your judgement, that we might all joyne in one heart, and *Covenant*, for establishing Religion, and opposing *errors*. And for your *Argument*, whether the Articles of *Perth* and *Episcopacie*, bee against the puritie and liberty of the Gospell or not, which is not determined by these words of the *Covenant*. But it cannot be denyed, first, That if in a *free Assembly*, they bee found to bee against the puritie and libertie of the Gospell, they ought to bee abolished: in the meane time, it being left free, by the words of the *Covenant* to all, who will stand to the defence of their lawfulnessse. Secondly, how can it be denyed, that manie corruptions, contrarie to the puritie and libertie of the Gospell, were they never so innocent in themselves, have accompanied these *Novations*, such as the superstitious observing of *Dayes*, seriation and cessation from worke, on thole *Dayes*, *Feasting*, *guy-fing*, &c. manie grosse abuses have entred in the *Sacrament*, upon *kneeling* before the elements, and upon the lawlesse usurpation of *Prelates*: in respect whereof, even they who allow *Perth Articles*, and *Episcopacie*, may sweare to recover the puritie of the Gospell. And thirdly, who can bee so great a stranger at home, as to denye, that manie corruptions of *Poperie* and *Arminianisme*, have entred in the Kirke, and have beene vented, and defended, in Schools, and pulpits: by reason whereof wee are bound, everie one of us, according to the measure of our light, to labour for recovery of our former *Puritie*. And therefore, if you had cast your eyes upon the condition of this poore Kirk, as yee have pryed narrowlie, into the *Expressions* of the *Covenant*, yee might have spared both your owne labour and ours, and not laboured to skarre both your selves and others, with this shadow.

In your *Argument*, *ad hominem*, you should have considered, that whatsoever bee our judgement, as wee are particular persons, yet, at this time wee were to bee taken, as *Commissioners*, from the whole companie of *Subscribers*, who

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who, about this point, are of different judgments, and if some of your owne judgment, had either come alone in our place, or had beene joyned in *Commission* with us, we had anticipate your *Objection*; and this yee have beene forced to see: and so your selves, in propounding your *Objection*; have answered your owne *Syllogisme*, in making us to say, that yee may *swear* and *subscribe*, seeing ye thinke not these things to bee abjured in that *Oath* made *Anno 1581*: neither was it for you, to inquire in our private *Opinion*, nor necessarie for us, to make it knowne, but to have conceived of our mindes, according to our *Commission*, and the will of those that sent us. Your *Arguments* neede to bee no impediments unto your swearing of the *Covenant*. For upon your grounds, you would not have sworne the *Short Confession*, any time bypast: yea. yee can not swear the *Confession* of anie Kirke: nay, not the *Articles* of the *Craod*, because of the diverse *Interpretations* of the Article of *Christs descent into Hell*; or swearing them in *Scotland* and *England*, yee behoved to swear them in diverse senses. There be some words of the *Lord's prayer* as, *Give us this day our daylie bread*; and of the x *Commands* as the wordes of the 4 *Command*, which are diversly understood; must Christians, therefore, forbear to joyne in saying the *Prayer*, or swearing *Obedience* to the *Commandments*. Neither for this doe wee admit anie *ambiguities*, or *equivocation*: the wordes certainly have but one true sense and signification; but diverse persons conceive and understand them, according to the different measures of their light. Since then your *Disputation*, is builded upon such a *Supposition*, it must eyther fall to the ground; or hardlie can any *Confession of Faith*, or Religious *Covenant* be sworne. Offend not therefore, if wee in modesty present unto you, *A Disc of your owne dressing*; we meane, the like *Argument ad huncum*.

The Rites and Ceremonies which are not abjured in the negative Confession, are not abjured in this late Covenant. But

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But the Rites and Ceremonies, which were concluded in Perth Assembly, are not abjured at you say, in the negative Confession made, 1581.

Therefore they are not abjured in this late Covenant, as yee thinke.

The first Proposition is evident, because in the late Covenant we are bound no farther, concerning the negative Confession, but to keep it inviolable; and therefore, what Rites are not abjured there, are not abjured here? The second Proposition cannot be denied by you; for these twenty years bygone yee have thought your selves free of perjury, notwithstanding of the Oath in 1581. & of your conforming your selves to the ordinances of Perth. And whereas ye alledge, afterward, as before, that our Supplications are satisfied, the contrary is known by our publick Protestation, & by our last Supplication & complaint presented to his Majesties Commissioner. And the urging of the Service-book, was a sufficient Reason, for forbearance of Perth articles, till an assembly, at which time it may bee determined, whether it bee expedient, that this Kirk bee any more troubled with them. Neither needeth your conscience to subscribe the forbearance of these Novations, as if swearing of forbearance, were a swearing of disobedience to *Authoritie*: first, because the swearing of forbearance of a thing in your opinion, indifferent; in the case of scandal, and of sensible feare in others; of *Superstition*, is the swearing of Obedience to the Commandment of God, which forbiddeth us, to destroy him, for whom Christ dyed; altho man should command the contrary. 2. Because the articles of Perth were concluded, for satisfying, & not to presse any man with the practise of them, as was openly professed unto the Opponents. before the face of the whole Assembly, and because the Act it self giveth warrant, to forbear the practise at this time, when the memorie of *Superstition* is revived, which maketh us to thinke, that they who have forborne the practise of these Articles, since the superstitious Service booke was compla-

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ned upon, make most truely conscience of *Obedience* of the *Act of Perth*, & *Parliament*, ratifying the same, and are most conforme to the Confession of faith, ratifyed in Parliament, declaring that *Ceremonies* ought to bee changed; when they rather softer *Superstition*, than edifie the Kirke, using the same. Last of all, You saye, yee can not sweare *Forbearance*, because yee can not abstaine from private *Baptisme*, and private *Communion*: where we perceive, that, in your judgment, private *Baptisme* & *Communion*, are not any more things indifferent, but *necessarie*, *necessitate precepti*, in so farre, that the not using them, is a contempt of the Meanes, and a tempting of God. By this your doctrine, first, The state of the *Question* anent *Perth* articles, is quite altered: for yee, and your *Associates*, did ever to this time, alledge the *Question*, to bee of things indifferent: but now yee finde some of them so necessarie, that although the generall *Assembly of the Kirke*, should discharge them: yet yee behoved still, for conscience of the Commandement of God to practise them. If yee have the same judgement of *Kneeling before the Elements*, and of festivall *Dayes*, it cometh to passe amongst us, which hath bene incident to the Kirke in former ages that things have bene first brought in, as indifferent, then urged as necessarie. If *Confirmation* also in your judgement, bee not indifferent, but *necessarie*, we desire to understand, with what conscience it hath bene slighted, and utterly neglected by the Prelates these 20 yeeres past? and how it is, that yee have carried so small regard to the *Canon of the Kirke*, and *Act of Parliament*, and to the benefite of young Children, as not to require, urge, and presse the practise thereof, both in your owne *Charge* & throughout the whole Kirke? This would seeme to bee *partiall dealing*, to practise some *Ceremonies*, and neglect other some; while both by the same *Canon of the Kirk* & *Act of Parliament* are appointed. 2. Ye doe hereby coudemne the practise of the Kirke of *Scotland*; from the time of *Reformation*; till *Perth* Assembly; and put no small guiltinesse upon other

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reformed Kirke, who use not that at all, but rather abstaine from it; as *dangerous*, which yee now doe prokfe, to be so necessarie. 3. We wish you wisely to consider, whence it is, and what can bee the true cause, that yee living in that part of the Kingdome, should bee more pressed by the people, with the practise of privat *Baptisme*, and *Communion*, than all the Kirks in the Kingdome beside, where these 20 yeares past, rarely any such motion hath beene made: it is not because that *Poperie* prevaileth there, and the people have a superstitious conceate of *Baptisme & Communion*, as absolutely necessarie to Salvation; as if GOD had tyed his grace to the *Sacraments*; and children dying without *Baptisme*, and others without their last *Viaticum* did perishe. Thus ye minister the Sacraments in private; as necessarie *necessitate precepti*; and the people seeme to desire, and receive them, as necessarie, *necessitate medij*; [an Evil very curable], in that Citie where the Assemblies of the people, for publick worship are frequent, wherein the *Sacraments* might bee ministred frequently enough, with great solemnitie and edification. 4. And though wee doe not deny, but *Baptisme* privately ministred, by the Minister of CHRIST, according to the *institution*, be true *Baptisme*, and, that a childe thus privately baptized, bee not to bee baptized againe, (altho it be true also, that private *Baptisme* maketh way to the Errour of *re-baptizing*,) yet wee hold that the necessitie of the Commandement, stands only for *Baptisme* in publicke, since no Precept requireth *Baptisme*, but when the ministracion thereof can bee had orderly, with all the circumstances requisite; whereof this is one, That it bee ministred in the presence of that visible Kirke, whereof the children are to bee members: for not onely the minister of *Baptisme*, and the Parents of the children, but the Congregation also hath interest in the *baptisme* of everie member that entereth in their *Communion*; which therefore, ought to bee a publick action, no lesse than the cutting off of a rotten member, by *Excommunication*, ought to be

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to bee done publickly. 5. It is knowne that privat *Baptisme* hath bred, and fostered the opinion of absolute necessitie of *Baptisme*, of *Baptisme of women*, and *private persons*, of *Baptisme by supposition*, &c. and, that the ministrati^on of the Sacraments in private places, hath beene, and is, the ready waye to bring people to the contempt, and neglect of the Sacramentes in publicke, and to the proph^{an}ation thereof in private. 6. When all the formes of ministrati^on of *Baptisme*; shall bee compared, both that of the ancient Kirks, keeping *Easter* and *Pentecost*, for the solemn^e times of Baptisme, and the other of the *Papist kirke*, and other Kirks, not well purged of the dregs of *Paperie*; ministring Baptisme and Communion at all times, in privat places, & before few persons; it shall be found, that no better course could bee taken, than that which hath beene wyfelic appointed and observed, in the Kirk of *Scotland*, since the Reformation, that the Sacraments be ministr^{ed} in the ordinarie meetings of GOD'S people; unto which they had regard, and not unto the places of materiall kirkes: which wee adde, lest any should thinke, that wee entertaine any superstitious conceit of places.

To the fifth.

TO the first *Exception*, wee have even now answered, and need to adde no farther, concerning private *Baptisme* and *Communion*. 2. Wee looked that your argument, *ad hominem*, had beene closed in the fourth reply. & wish, what yee had to say against the *Disput of Popish English Ceremonies*, or any other *Treatise* of that kynd, or any of us in particular, had beene kept to another time: for, wold any of us, refuse to sweare the short *Confession*, because yee I ave expounded some articles thereof, contrarie to our mynde? Our desire is, that ye keepe your owne meaning of the negative *Confession*, and we keepe ours, according to our diverse measures of light: and, that both sides promise *forbearance*, as is required in the *Covenant*, which may ve
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rie well stand both with your meaning, and ours : of ours, there is no question : and of yours, there needeth none to bee moved by you, since ye thinke them *indifferent* and therefore, in such a case, may promise, to *forbear* them. From this ground, and from the different use of the word *Discipline*, and *Policie*, it is easie to answer, both your *Serites* and *Dilemma* for the late *Covenant*, bindeth you to keepe the former, according to the common meaning of the *Subscribers*, and not according to your *interpretation* or ours, in particulare: and the hornes of your *Dilemma*, maye be turned against your selves : for wee aske of you, Vnto which of the members of the *Distinction* doe you referre *Episcopacie*, and the Articles of *Perib* if they were abjured for ever, before *Perib* Assembly, how is it that yee have admitted and practised them, since that tyme; for this was perjury? And if they were not abjured, but by the short *Confession* were left indifferent, why may yee not, for any impediment yee have from that *Confession*, forbear now the practise of them? Wee looked not for *velitations* of this sort, which the change of *Commissioners* sent unto you might have prevented, but for some solide and grave reasons, why yee could not subscribe the *Covenant*, whether presented from our hands, or the handes of others, our Learned and Reverend *Brethren*, of your practise and judgment, who might have beene sent unto you in our place. In the meane tyme, because manie are intangled with the word of *Discipline*, and *Policie*, we desire the Reader to remember, that sometime the word is taken for the *Rule of Governement of the Kirke*, and *censure of Manners*, by Office-bearers appointed by Christ; and thus it was unchangeable: sometime for the *Constitution of Councells* and Acts of *Parliament*, about matters of *Religion*, and thus it is alterable or constant according to the nature of particular *Object*s; and thirdly, it is taken for the ordering of the circumstances, to bee observed in all actions *Divine*, and *Humane*: and thus it is variable. Wee

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appeale with you, to the indifferent Reader, who is judicious, whether it bee necessarie for your Subscription, to knowe our Opinion of such Rites & Ceremonies, as are not of divine institution. Wee have reason, (for any thing that ever wee heard to the contrarie, these 20 years past) to cleave unto the wordes of the Covenant, concerning such Rites as are brought into the Kirke, without or against the word of GOD. The blessing of *Marriage* (now the second time instanced) wee conceive neither to bee circumstance, it beeing neither time, place, order of doing, nor anye such thing, nor a *Ceremonie* properly so called, more than the *blessing* of the people, commanded in the *Law*, & practised before the Law; or praying for a Blessing upon the Ordinance of God that it may bee sanctified unto His people: wee neither exalt *Marriage* so high, as with the *Papists* to thinke it a Sacrament; nor doe wee abase it so lowe, as to thinke it a paction or *Contract*, meerly civill, it beeing the *Covenant* of God, which cannot be dissolved by consent of the parties, as other civill Contracts maye bee: and therefore, as wee will not use it superstitiously, according to the praescript of the *Service booke*, so will wee not for the abuse of *Poperie*, although it were a Paction meerly civill, it beeing so important, with-hold Ecclesiastick *Benediction* from it.

To the sixth.

Silence carrieth sometimes the appearance of *Consent*, sometime it is from weaknesse: and since you knowe also, that it maye at sometimes come from wisdom, and moderation; why doe yee not rather keepe silence your selves, than make such an interpretation of ours? We demye not, but *Divines* both ancient, and moderne, are against us, concerning the lawfulnessse of the things contraverted: but wee withall affirme, first, That *Divines* both ancient and moderne, are against you also, and both may bee true, for both are *Propositions indefinite*, in a matter *contingent*. 2, That almost all *Divines* universally are for

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us, and for the forbearance of things *indifferent*, in such a case, which is the point urged by us, and cleared before. Secondly, wee deny not, but the *Oath* containeth manie other Articles: but concerning that of the *Novations* already introduced, if you could have believed us, & so many thousands as have subscribed, it containeth no more, but *the forbearance of them, for a time*, neither can any farther bee extorted from the tenor of the *Covenant* it self, according to your grounds. If you will interpret it according to the meaning which yee thought it hadde the last year, and which we urge you not to change: & to promise *forbearance*, can neither bee contrarie to that duetie which ye ow to your flock, nor be disobedience to *Authority*, but a means to edifie God's people, and obedience to God.

To the seventh.

First, The *Reason* propounded in the 7. Demand, for refusing your *Subscription*, because yee supposed *Perth* Articles to have beene abjured, as *Popish*, is answered to the full, and the impediment put out of your way. This other that ye propound concerning our conception and meaning of the short *Confession*, may bee as easilie removed, if yee will once believe; that wee urge not upon you our meaning, but leave you to your owne, till the matter be examined in an Assembly. 2. Ye call some of those *novations*, necessarie: but without warrant of that *Assembly*, which concluded them, as indifferent, & all the rest ye will have to bee laudable: thus by progresse of time, things formerly *indifferent*, become *necessarie*: and what was but *lawfull* before, and had much adoe to gaine that reputation, is now become *laudable*: where yee plainly discover the cause of your unwillingnesse to subscribe, not so much to bee the commandement of *Authoritie*, as the necessitie and excellencie of the things commanded. Till yee therefore, change this opinion, ye cannot promise *forbearance* neither upon our dealing, nor at the commandement of *Authoritie*, altho *forbearance* should serve for the peace of the Kirk, & Kingdom.

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To the eight.

First, Wee remit the Reader to our Answer, and your Reply, which, we hope, shall be found no *Confutation*.
2. We observe, That ye have not answered our *argument*, for our *swearing the Defence of the King and his Authoritie*, with a *specification*, which yee call a *limitation*, wherein we have followed the Confession of *Faith*, ratified in Parliament, the King's *Confession*, and Act of Parliament, upon which yee will not doe well, to fasten so foule *imputations*, and put so hard *Construtions*, as yee doe upon us, for inserting in our *Covenant*, what they have said before us. If our *specification* be right, why censure you it? If it bee wrong, why fasten you not your censures upon the *Fountaine* from which it is derived? The *Loyaltie* of our *intentions to maintaine the Kings person, and honour*, is fully expressed, that it hath given content to those who are nearest his Majesty: and wee should wrong, not onely them, but also the *Covenant*, and the *Subscribers* thereof, if wee should make new *Declarations* to others of greater *distance*, who wrong both the King, and them-selves, in craving them.

3. To doe with a doubting *Conscience*, is a grievous sinne but to make and multiplie *doubtes, for hindering a good worke*, and to oppose against a shyning *Light*, is no lesse grievous. Ye spake before of a *limitation*, & now ye have added *Precisie*, as if the naming of our *Duetie*, were the excluding of all other *Dueties*. We all by our *Oath of Alledgeance, by his Majesties Lawes and by other Obligations* acknowledge, that wee owe many other *dueties* to the King, which were verie impertinent to expresse in this *Covenant*. 4. What kynd of Conference yee meane; whether by word or writ: we know not, but while we were amongst you; yee know what notice yee were pleased to to take of us, and wee have no delight, to resent it.

To the ninth.

First. Wee are ashamed to draw the *Rug-saw* of *Contention*, to and fro, in a continuall *Reciprocation*, concerning the *serbeuranc* of *Fourth Articles*, and therefore
for

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forbearing to doe so any more, wee referre the Reader to our former Answers. 2. We doe not affirme that the only Reason, why *Kneeling* was appointed, was because all memorie of *Superstition* was past. There be indeed other Reasons expressed in the *Act*, but such as the authors thereof may bee ashamed of, as both perverting the Text. *Psal.* 93, as making *Kneeling* to bee necessarie, in everie part of GOD'S Worship, and as giving matter to many Treatises, proving *kneeling* before the Elements, to be *idolatrie*, according to the *Act*, unto which wee now referre you: but this wee say, (which is manifest by the *Act* it selfe) that in the case of present *Superstition*, or feare thereof, all other Reasons had not bene forcible, to enforce *kneeling* then, nor can have force to continue kneeling now. This feare hath bene great, this yeere by past, throughout the kingdome, by reason of the manie Superstitions of the *Service booke*, which it may bee yee no more acknowledge, than yee doe the superstitious disposition of the people, because they are not that which they were at the time of Reformation. 3. Wee would heare what *Malice* it self can say against the words of the Protestation, *That it shall be lawfull unto us, to defend Religion, and the Kings Authority, in defence thereof, and everie one of us of another, in that cause of maintaining Religion, and the Kings forsaide Authority, and to appoynt and hold Meetings to that end:* lyke as our Proceedings have bene in themselves most necessarie, and orderly means; agreeable to the Lawes and practise of this Kirke and Kingdome, to be commended as *Real Democrists* of faythfull Christians, loyall Subjects, and sensible members of the bodie of the Kirke and Kingdome, and tend to no other ende, but to the preservation of Religion, and maintenance of the King's Authoritie.

To your *Interrogator* (which yee seeme to propone, rather to be *snared* to us, than for satisfaction to your selves) we answer once for all in generall, That if this were the opportunity to that Disputation, wee shall bee found to deny

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aye nothing unto Authoritie of that which the words of GOD, the Law of Nature, and Nations, the Acts of Parliament, chiefly *Royalists*, sound Divines, and loyall Subjects give unto Kings and Princes. GODS *Viceroy* on earth, and that not from respect to our selves, but to the Ordinance of GOD, by whom Kings reign. But seeing so off, & so instantly, you press us in this point, yet force us mutually to propose to you such Questions, as it may bee, yee will have no great delight to answer. We desire to understand of you, Whether yee allow, or disallow the *Service booke*, and booke of *Canons*? If you disallow them as an innovation of *Religion*, why have ye not either joynd in *Supplication* with the rest of the Kingdome, or made a *Supplication* of your owne, against them, or some other way testified your *dislike*? Next, Whether it bee pertinent for men of your Place and Qualitie, to move Questions of *State*, touching the *Power of Princes*, and liberties of *Subjects*: after his Majesties *Commissioner*, & wife States-men have received satisfaction of the Subjects: for suppressing such motions as yours? 3. Whether doe the *Subscribers* more tender his Majesties Honour, by supposing his constancie, in profission of *Religion*, and equivable *disposition*, in ministration of *Justice*: or yee who suppose hee shall fall upon his religious and loyall Subjects, with force of *Armes*, contrarie to both? 4. Whether the joyning of the whole Kingdome, in the subscription of the *Covenants*, or the intreating *division*, by your writing, preaching, and threatening of your people, otherwise willing to joyne, bee a more readie *Meane* to settle the present *Contentions* of the Kirke, and Kingdome? 5. If the Prelates and their Followers labouring to introduce *Papery* in the Land, make a *Faction* by themselves, or as the *Gnifians* in *France*, did abuse his Majesties name, in execution of the bloodie Decrees of *Trent*, (which GOD forbid) wee aske, Whether in such a *Case*, the lawfull defence of the bodie of the Kingdome, against such a *Faction*, bee a

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Supplie of false Magistrates, and a taking of the King's name. If ye thinke it to be, is not this to take part with a Faction seeking their owne ends, against the Common-wealth of the King, and Kingdome, and Honour of the King? If ye say no. Why then find you fault with our *Confession* of defending the Religion, Liberties, and Honour of the Kingdome, of the Kings Authority, in defence thereof, and none one of us of another, in that cause, as if it were an unlawfull combination against Authorities? Whether doe yee thinke Christian Magistrates to bee of so absolute and undoubted power, notwithstanding of the Promise, or paction made with the Subjects at their Consecration, or of any law made for the establishing their Religion, & Liberties, that there is nothing left but suffering of Martyrdom, in the case of pitting Magistrates, of their Religion, and Liberties? If ye thinke, that any *Defence*, is lawfull, why will you constraine yee the Subscribers of the *Covenant*? If not, how can you be free of suffering, and of stirring up Princes against their loyal Subjects, for such ends as opposites know beare. We will believe, that yet shall report small thanks, either of so good & just a King, or of so dutiefull Subjects, for entering within these Lists. It is enough, that such Questions bee agitated in the Schooles, and that with as great prudence, & as circumspically as may bee.

To the tenth.

First, yee take us in our 4 *Reply* to bee the petters of the *Covenant*, and yet will rather wrest the wordes of it, to your owne meaning, than receive the Interpretation thereof from us: for wee preiudge not your libertie of conception of that short *Confession*; but permit it to yourselves, whatsoever may bee the private meaning of some who have subscribed; yet their is nothing in the late interpretation that condemneth the Articles of *Pearse*, and Episcopacie, as *Papish Novations*. Yee may voyce & reason in an *Assembly* as freelic concerning them; and give
your

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your judgement of them, without prejudice; notwithstanding of your *Oath*, according to your owne grounds, as you would have done at the Assembly of *Perib*. 2. We hope yee bee not so ignorant of the estate of the Kirke, neither will wee judge so uncharitable; as to think you so corrupt, that in your opinion there is no thing hath entered in the Kirke, since that time designed by you, beside Episcopacie, and Articles of *Perib*, which can bee thought prejudiciall to the libertie, and puritie of the Gospell.

To the eleventh.

First, yee finde fault with us, that wee have not upon this occasion, given you that testimonie which wee owe to you, of your sinceritie; and professing the *Truth*, &c. therefore, to supplie our defects, have taken an ample Testimonie to your selves, of paines in *Disputing*, in *Writing*, and *preaching* against *Poperie*, in *processsing* of *Papists*, and in *doing* all things, which can bee expected from the most *zealous*, of *frequent* prayer to *GOD*, of *humbling* your selves before Him, of your *holiness* of *Life*, and *Conversation*, &c. which have made us who were desirous to heare that Testimonie, rather at the mouthes of others, that wee might bee no more challenged as deficient in that kynde, but give unto you your deserved praise, to inquire in matters; where-upon, if wee would believe the report of others, wee heare, that for all your paynes, *Papists*, and persons popishly affected, are multiplyed, and *Papistrie* increased in your towne, more than in any other towne of the Kingdome, and no lesse under your Ministrie, than any time before, since the Reformation; that there be in private houses *Masses*, *Crucifixes*, and other monuments of *Idolatry*; that yee had not manie convers from *Poperie*, that *Iesuites*, and *Priests*; are countenanced there, that your People at home, and your Magistrates abroad, complayne; that yee are but too sparing of your paines in preaching, and often fill your places with *Novices*: but this

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this wee are sparing to believe, and wish, that the not
employing of your Tongues and Pennes, in defence of
the *Service booke*, and *Canons*, which are so pestred with
Poperie, (if the seedes of *Romish Hérésie*, *Superstition*, *Idol-
latry*, and Papall tyrannie come under that censure) and
your willingnesse to joyne with the Kirk and Kingdome,
in Fasting an Humiliation, had beene also Testimonies of
your sinceritie against Poperie. 2. The laudable meanes
of preaching, praying, &c. which wee wish may be still
in all faythfulness used by you, maye verie well agree
with the renewing of our *Covenant* with God, and both
beeing joyned, have, in a short time past, produced more
powerfull effects, to the comfort of manie thousandss,
than all our prayers and preaching have done for a long
tyme before: which testifie, That as it is warranted by
the Word of GOD; so the motion hath proceeded from
GOD. All the Arguments and *subtilties* that can be de-
vised, will never make a People, (who at this time have
found GOD dwelling, and working in their hearts) to
think the contrarie. 3. The naturall inclination of people
to Poperie, and the perswasion of others of their disposi-
tion, maye make the people to conceive other wayes of
the *Service booke*, and *Canons*, that ere it be long, they may
bee brought in, in a *fair and legall way*: and therefore, it is
necessarie, for preventing of those, and other *Evills* of
that kynde, that the Subjects joyne in a *Covenant*, both for
themselves, and their Posteritie.

To the twelfth.

First, Wee have ever preached according to our mea-
sure, and have given example of Reverence to *Autho-
ritie*, and the *LORDS Service*; but wee neither acknow-
ledge the usurped authoritie of *Prelates*, for lawfull *Autho-
ritie*, nor the *Service Booke*, for the *LORDS Ser-
vice*. And therefore, it was so much the more intolerable
for the *Prelates*, without Authoritie from the Kirke, or

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Parliament, to bring in the *Service booke* into GOD'S owne House, upon the LORD'S owne Day. Which maketh it nothing strange, that people zealous of the Truth, and of the Service of GOD, were stirred up to oppose: and wee are verie confident that those that have opposed, doe beare as loyall respect to the Kings Majestie, and will bee as loath to provoke him to just wrath, as *their Opposites* are. In the meane tyme, why doe yee not acknowledge, that the children were higher provoked to wrath, by the *Prelates*, whom yee account Reverend and holic *Fatherse*. 2. As the preservation of our owne private *Possession*, from *invasion* of others, belongeth to our selves, under the Kings protection; so the keeping of GODS House, from pollution and *Superstition*, belongeth to Authoritie, to the Communitie of the Faithfull, and to everie one in his owne Place and Order. 3. We told you before, That wee did no more allow Violence of that kind, nor wee did allow the foule *Aspersions of Rebellion, Heresie, Schisme & Perjurie*, put upon the Noble-men, and remnant *Covenanters*. And where yee aske of us, Why these tumults are not publickly by us condemned. and rebuked? Wee aske againe of you, why yee did not condemne and rebuke such dealing, since that it is no lesse Transgression, both against the sixth, and nynt *Command*, than the other is against the sixth? And whereas yee are now so peremptorie, in drawing a *Declaration* from us, answerable to that which yee have given concerning the foresayd aspersions and *Calumnies*, wee having no Commission, to declare the mindes of others in this point, or to give Documents, for our own private judgement, doe heartilie disallow everie *Wrong* of that kynd. As for the *Apologie of Doctor Iohn Forbes* of Corfe, seeing the *Wrong* hath beene done not unto some few particulare persons, such as ye say have been wronged by some of the people; but unto the bodie of the Kingdome, consisting of *Noble-men, Barons, &c.* who are highlie offended thereby, it were in us Presumption, and with-

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without the bounds of our Calling, to take upon us, to receive any Declaration of that kynd, especiallie wherein so manie things are reproveable; as first, That his bitter speeches were occasioned by some printed bookes, affirming, that *Episcopacie* and *Perth Articles*, were antichristian and abominable. Supposing it were true, did he think the Noble-men and whole *Covenanters*, to be the Authors of those Bookes? And was this dealing agreeable to that Christian meeknesse so much requyred of us before? The Wryters of those printed Bookes, are not the first who have spoken so. For Master *Knox* spared not, (in a Letter of his) to call this Kneeling, *A Diabolicall invention*. Secondly; The swearing of forbearance of the practise of *Perth articles* & the cōfirmation of the said doctrine which wee neither deny, nor affirme, to bee imported in the oldē *Covenant*, but onelie in the *interpretation* thereof, wee declare, That *Promise* is onely made, *to forbear for a tyme* dorth not deserve so bitter a censure, as this *Apologie* beareth upon us. 3. If the King's Majestie, Councell, or the subjects of *Scotland*, had asked his opinion and advice, hee he might have used the greater libertie. 4. It is illapologized, to call it an *holy indignation*; & worse defended; since it is such a wrath as worketh not the *righteousnesse* of GOD. 5. Whereas hee desireth to be accounted in the number of these, *qui proficiendo scribunt & scribendo proficiunt*, wee could wish that hee had profited better by writing, than hee hath done by wryting his *Irenicum*; first, & now this his *Warning*, after his *Irenicum*; for which if hee make no better *Apologie*, than confessing *asperities* of wordes, proceeding from an holy indignation, it will come to passe of his *Apologie*, as it fared with his *Irenicum*, unto which was applyed fitly. what was spoken in the lyke case,

Aus fabrum forceps, avarus ignara fessellis.

Superior voluit cedere cedis inferior.

6. Whereas yee desire us, *to doe the lyke*, if yee meane of us personallie, wee have declared our judgement, and shall

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shall bee carefull to approve our selves to GOD, and the consciences of all men, in everie such duetie: and if yee meane us, and those that sent us, wee shall not faile to to report unto them, what yee desire, altho our *Commission* from you had beene more acceptable, if yee had spoken more reverently of our *Confession* and *Covenant*, than yee have beene pleased to doe, in the wordes of your desire, and had put your hand unto the *Covenant*, which would presently have joyned us in a greater Affection, and made way for union in judgement, and perfect peace, which is the desire of our Soules.

To the thirteenth.

YEE pretended a threefolde *Scandall*, which should follow upon your *Subscription*. 1. The *scandall* of *dissenting* from other reformed Kirkes, and famous *Divines*. 2. The *scandall* of *dissenting* from *Authoritie*. 3. The *Scandall* of *Perjurie*. Wee answered, That the controverted words of the *Covenant* being rightly conceived, & interpreted according to their true meaning, & not after the glosse which yee have put upon them, doe put you out of danger of all the three *Scandalls*, which yee seeme to acknowledge of the first two, and maye by the lyke reason acknowledge of the third, of *Perjurie*. We dispute not of the lawfulnessse of the *Oath* given at your Admission, by what *Authoritie* it was exacted, with what conscience it was given, nor how yee can answer for the *scandall* risen thereupon: but conceaving it according to your owne grounds, none of you will saye, that yee have sworne the perpetuall Approbation and Practise of those things which yee esteeme to bee indifferent, what-soever bad consequent of *Poperie*, *Idolatrie*, *Superstition*, or *scandall* should follow thereupon: wee speake heere onely of things *Indifferent*, in your owne judgement; for yee have declared before, that yee thinke the Ministration of the *Sacraments* in private places, no more indifferent: and

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and therefore, cannot *forbear* the *practise* of these, altho your *Ordinarie*, and other lawfull *Superiours*, should will you to doe soe; wherein *Perths Assembly* for which you stand, is wronged by you two wayes: 1. That yee differ in judgement from them, about the *indifferencie* of the five *Articles*; and next, that at the will of your *Ordinarie*, and wee knowe not what other lawfull *Superiours*, yee are readie to forbear the *practise* of these thinges which the Assembly hath appointed to bee observed. What *Oathes* you have given at your admission, wee knowe not, because there is no ordinance made, *Civil* or *Ecclesiastick*, appointing any such *oath*, and because the *Prelates*, who arrogated that power, presented to the intrants diverse models of *Articles*, to bee subscribed, dealing with some more hardlie, and with others more favourably, according to their owne diverse motives, and considerations.

For some immediately after *Perth Assembly*, without any warrant from the Kirke or Parliament, were made to sweare at their admission, that they should both in private and publicke maintaine *Episcopall Iurisdiction*, and in their private and publicke prayers, commend the *Prelats* to Gods mercifull Protection; that they should subject themselves to the Orders that presently were in the Kirke, or by the consent of the said Kirke, should bee lawfullie established. The word *lawfullie*; was not in the Principal first subscribed, (as wee have learned) and if it had bene exprest, it is all one, for the *Superiours* were Iudges to this *lawfulnessse* and *unlawfulnessse*. Wee will not labour to reconcile everie *Oath* given by *Ministers*, at their entry with the present *Covenant*; but wish, and exhort rather, that they may bee recalled, and repented of, as thinges for which they cannot answere before a generall *Assembly*,

To the fourteenth.

IF the words of the *Covenant* bee plaine, concerning the *meere forbearance*, & speake nothing of the *unlawfulnessse*, no mans thoughts can make a change. 2. By this *Reply* ye wrong your selves, in forging from the words of the

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Covenant, impediments, and drawing stumbling block in your own way to hinder your *Subscription*; yee wrong the *Subscribers*, in changing the state of the question, & in making a divorce betwixt *Religion* and the Kings *Authority*, which the *Covenant* joyneth together, hand in hand; and, most of all, ye wrong the Kings Majestie, in bringing him upō the Stage, before his *Subjects*, in whose minds ye wold beget, & breed *suspitions*, of *opposing the Truth*, of making *innovation of Religion*, & of dealing with his *Subjects* contrary to his *Laws & Proclamations* & contrary to the Oath at his *Coronation*. We are not here seeking *invidia* upon ourselves, or a *starting hole of ignorance*, or the smallest *disloyalty of affection*; but would willingly decline that for the present, which neither his Majesties wisdom, nor the prudence of *Statesmen*; nor the modestie of good *Subjects*, will allow you or us to dispute. The *Crowns* and *Scepters* of Kings would be more tenderlie touched, than the ordinarie *Subjects* of *Schoole Disputes*. The naked naming, & bare ropofall of certaine *suppositions*, such (as some are made by you) cannot but reflex upon *Authoritie*, & sound harsh in the eares of all his Majesties good *Subjects*. who wish, *he may long and prosperously reigne over us*. 3. His Majesties most honourable privie Counsell, hath proven more favourable to this cause, of maintaining the reformed *Religion*, than many *Pastors*, whom by reason of their place & Calling, it becomed to goe before others; & altho according to their wonted custome, they gave warrant, to make his Majesties *Proclamation*, yet on good grounds remonstrated unto them by the *Supplicants*, they willingly refused their *Approbation*, therof; hoping that his Majestie should be moved to give greater satisfaction thereafter: and this is not our saying, but a *publicke doing*, before many honourable witnesses; of which number, some were directed unto you, whose report yee have no reason to call in question. 4. It becometh us, to judge charitably of the intentions of our *Superiors*; but most of all, of the *Intentions* of our dread *Souveraigne*. Yet if that hold good which the *Supplicants* have offered

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offred to prove, that the *Service booke, & Canons*, containe
a reall innovation of Religion wee must judge otherwise, *de*
conditione operis, of the matters contained in the booke, than *de*
intentione operantis, of his Majesties intention; altho the inten-
tion of the Prelats & their associates, the Authors and *Con-*
trivers of the Bookes be most justly suspected by us. 5. It is
no delight to us, and can bee but small comfort to you, to
mention the wrongs, which by you are done to us all who
have joyned in this *Covenant*, & doe adhere to the Religion
as it was reformed in this Land; in your estimation and
wrytings, we are rebellious, perjured, hereticke, schismaticke,
blind guides, seducers, miserable interpreters, ignorants: Shall
such men as these bee your reverend Brethren? Is this your
meeknesse & charitie? Is this the duetie ye expect from us?
But setting these aside, yee have wronged us, in with-
holding your hand and helpe from so good a Cause, of purging
Religion, & reforming the Kirke from so many grosse Abus-
ses, and opposing all those who have modestlie laboured
for Reformation Your speeches in private, in your cham-
bers, beds of sicknes, & in your missives, & in publicke, at
tables and in Synods, which are come to our knowledge;
wee wish rather should be remembered, & repented of, by
your selves, than bee recited by us, who desire not to work
you any trouble. 6. Altho there be a perpetuall harmonie
betwixt the Word and Workes of GOD, farre contrarie to
that which wee find to bee amongst the children of men;
yet often it cometh to passe, that the Word and Warnings
of GOD, which we heare with our eares, are not behe-
ved, till we behold with our eyes, the plaine Commentaries
thereof, in his Works. Many Proofs and notable Documents
have beene observed of the Finger of GOD, in the Worke
in hand, the Characters of the great [Workes of GOD'S,
more than ordinarie Providence, since the beginning, are
legible heere. Then did the LORD bgin this work, when
the Adversaries were raised to a great hight, and become
intolerably insolent. The beginnings were small, and in the
eyes of the world contemptible; such as use to bee the be-
ginnings.

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ginnings not of the works of men, but of the magnificke
works of GOD: the power of G O D sensible in the hearts
of many, & manifested by the joy; the teares and cryes of
many thousands, at the *solemn renewing of this Covenant*,
hath beene a matter of *admiration and amazement*, never to
bee forgotten, to many wise and ancient Pastors and Pro-
fessors, who did also finde an unwonted flame, warming
their owne breasts; the *plots and workings of the adversa-
ry*, have wrought against their own *projects*, & have served
for our endes, more than all that have beene thought, or
done by our selves, that wee may justly say, what they de-
vysed, for evill, the LORD hath turned to good: manie
thousands conveyed, diverse times, in one place, have
been kept in such order & quyetnesse, without the smallest
trouble, in such sobernesse & temperance, without excesse
or riot, that hardly can *History* furnish a *Paralell*, & what
effectes there bee already throughout the Land, of *Pietie*
in domestick *worship*, in observing the *exercises of Religion*,
in *publick*, of *sobernesse in dyet and apparell*, & of *righteous-
nesse and concord*, wee trust shall be sensible by the *Blessings*
of GOD upon us, and shall be exemplarie to the *Posteritie*,
These wee present unto you, and unto all, as a *Commentary*,
written by the LORD'S owne hand; wishing againe, that
neither yee nor others, bee found fighting against GOD,
*Who so is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall unde-
rstand the loving kindnes of the Lord.* Psal 107. 43.
*Lord; when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see, but they shall
see, & bee ashamed for their envy at the people.* Ps. 26. 11.

Master Alexander Henderson,
Minister at Leuchars.

Master David Dickson,
Minister at Irwin.

